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# The American Teacher

*Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.*

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## PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Since self-imposed tasks are carried with better grace than the arbitrary dictates of others, participation in school administration would **put the teacher in a happier frame of mind;**

Since such participation would keep the teacher informed of the administrative problems of the school, **it would convert red tape into co-operation;**

Since it would free the teacher to consider the child as more directly the object of his concern, **it would transform servility to officials into service to society;**

Since it would acquaint the teacher with what is feasible in schoolwork, **it would make the results of his thought and study more available;**

Since it would make the teacher feel the responsibility of the larger work, **it would increase the teacher's self-respect.**

## THE NEW PEDAGOGY

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AS IN ALL SCIENCES, the important feature in the development of the science of education is the improvement of its method of observation. For several hundreds of years educators have been in the habit of accepting educational principles and didactical devices from people outside the school room. Some educators, indeed, have been "watching" school children, but it has never occurred to them to examine experimentally for themselves. The reason pedagogy is a hundred years behind the physical sciences is because of the general neglect to introduce into the study of teaching the experimental or laboratory method. We should not forget how painful the progress of the astronomers was while they confined themselves to mere observations of the heavens; how rapidly it advanced when some of the observed phenomena could be imitated in laboratory experiments.

Scientific pedagogy has not yet taken hold of the minds of educators. There is a common temptation to explain the mysteries of the child's psychological nature by brilliant theories rather than by a patient study of facts. As in other sciences a worker in the science of education must be absolutely free from preconceptions. He must be cautious, painstaking and unbiased in his interpretations of what his senses reveal to him.

Knowledge of children is a source of power to the principal or teacher, but, to be available, such knowledge must be definite and precise. In a word, it must be scientific. The individual teacher must be, at all times, quite clear in his own mind as to the justification of his

educational methods. He must seek to solve all pedagogical questions from the pupil's standpoint. Of course, we know that experimental pedagogy cannot solve all school problems. Education must proceed on the basis of certain fixed standards, which are to serve as guide posts, but the standards themselves can be determined only on the basis of actual conditions.

We have many psychological, anthropological and pedagogical studies, carried on either in a laboratory or on the basis of a *questionnaire*. These laboratory movements are designated by various names: Experimental Pedagogy, Child-study, Pedagogy, Pedotechnic, Pupil-study, Educational Psychology, Scientific Education, Individual or Differential Psychology, Scientific Empirical Pedagogy and Modern or New Pedagogy. The aim of all these movements is to make a correct analysis of the child's psychophysical nature. They differ, however, in studying either babies alone, or children below school age, or school children of all ages, or the elementary school children or the high school children alone. They differ, also, in the means of reaching their aims. Thus, Wundt and his American follower C. H. Judd, believe that the psychological analysis of the child's nature can never be fully understood except thru the analysis of the mental life of adults. This analysis is made by mature introspection carried out under experimental conditions.

On the other hand, Prof. G. Stanley Hall maintains that the mental life of adults is fully understood only by investigating the mentalities of children and of savages, on the basis of measurements, comparisons, scientific observations and experiments. E. Meumann restricts his intellectualistic, for-

mal, experimental pedagogy to the school-child. The aim of his method is the determination of the values of pedagogy and of pedagogical devices. W. A. Lay's method of volitional experimental didactics amounts to observing exactly the school practise and controlling the results by tests and statistics so that results may be compared.

2. For the second group of laboratory studies we have had many practical experiments, such as Dewey's elementary school in Chicago, Reddi's school in Abbotsholme, England; Lietz's schools in Germany, Tolstoy's and Ventzel's schools in Russia, Ferrero's school in Portugal; also other schools in France, Germany, and Australia.

These schools all obtain results that tend to discredit the present systems of public and private elementary and secondary education in their organization and in their methods of teaching.

3. The first two groups of laboratory work in education are not, strictly speaking, true pedagogical experiments. The only experiment that can be called both scientific and pedagogical is the work of the "Psycho-Pedological Institute" in St. Petersburg. This institution was founded in 1906 by V. T. Bechtereve, who gave a beautiful building and an endowment of 52,000 rubles.

The children are received in babyhood and are expected to live in the institution until they are twenty-one years old. They are to be studied and educated during that time. The first child who entered the institution was Seryoja Parinkin. He, with three other babies who have since been admitted, is under the constant care and observation of special nurses and two physicians.

The program for the study of these babies is too long to present here. However, it includes not only the problems of the present, but also the facts of the past life of the children; that is, their heredity and their prenatal life. Their bodies are carefully examined and the working of their organs ascertained in relation to the environment. Every day the temperature, circulation, respiration,

and nourishment are carefully recorded. From time to time note is made of their weight, and body proportions, also of their teething and various discomforts. Then the development of the sense organs is studied. In short the "natural history" of the child is investigated with the same thoroughness with which the modern zoölogist studies the life-histories of worms and crabs. All these observations will yield most precious practical conclusions in regard to the first years of the lives of children.

Thru these studies we should learn much more than we now know about habit formation, about natural and artificial movements, and about a child's conscious and unconscious relations to his environment, to acquaintances and friends, the nature of fear, etc.

The St. Petersburg institution should be a great aid toward making good pupils and good teachers.

4. Beside experiments like the one just described, we need *real school experiments*. These experiments will enable us to determine the best methods of teaching reading, writing, number work, drawing, etc., to children who live in different houses and in different environments. We must also learn what are the best methods of grading and promoting pupils, and what is the course of study best suited to mental and physical health. We do not know, and we must find out the best way to prepare children for citizenship and true democracy.

We are just beginning to reform our schools on the basis of a few pedagogical and medical tests. The Mannheim system, Kerschensteiner's experiments in Munich, and our present school, psychological, pedagogical and medical clinics, are only fragmentary attempts. Logically, it does seem that we must know by experiment, before we can teach, or before we can show others how to teach. Curiously enough, we have thousands of normal schools, but are just beginning to talk about the need of the kind of school that should precede the normal school.

## MUSIC IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MARK HOFFMAN

ARE WE TO-DAY handing over to our children their musical inheritance? Do the names of Beethoven, Wagner and Chopin call up definite musical images to the average graduate of our schools? Do we teach our pupils to appreciate or love music, or are we creating in them a positive distaste for the sublimest of the arts? Can our graduates distinguish between the popular and the classic, between the permanent and the temporary in music?

The answer to all these questions is obvious to any one who knows the facts. Speaking pedagogically, we are to-day in music at about the same stage that we were twenty-five years ago, in reading—all form, and an impoverished content. We are rattling the dry bones of musical notation, and are either neglecting wholly, or merely teaching incidentally, the appreciative side of music. Beethoven, Wagner and Chopin mean nothing to the average graduate unless the latter has had the advantages afforded by a cultivated home, where music holds a prominent place among the many other instruments of culture.

Our children to-day are getting neither the formal, empty musical notation, nor are they taught to appreciate good music thru a conscious, definite course of appreciation, ranging from the folksong thru the modern tone-poem. In an eight or twelve year course, what would not a child of intelligent parents hear and learn to appreciate in music? And why should not the school take the place of a cultivated home, and give the children a good measure of the great songs, sonatas, symphonies and operas of the great composers?

It is not the function of the school to train musicians, but rather to train

the average individual to love and appreciate good music. A beginning has already been made in that direction, in our own city. In some schools, principals' and parents' associations have installed pianolas, and concerts are regularly given in these schools with most gratifying results. Children have at their beck and call the great musical masterpieces of the world. (To forestall the usual objections let us say right here that "canned" music is better than no music.) In these schools the children have already shown a marked respect and love for music; a world has been opened to them which they had not dreamed of. Music had always meant a weary succession of intervals that must be "conned and learned by rote." Now for the first time have they been made to feel the transcendent beauty of this sublime art.

We are to-day obsessed by the fetich of exactness and perfection—and RESULTS. The little appreciative music that we give in our assembly-rooms, we drill and re-drill on, until children become callous to their beauty. The average pupil sees no need of all this straining after delicate nuances that we wish to exhibit at Closing Exercises. Once they know a song fairly well, children do not wish to be forever rehearsing it. The teacher should immediately pass on to the next song. We have all noticed with what joy pupils take up a new song—how anxious they are to learn it—and how stale it becomes after too much repetition. We disgust and dishearten them by our efforts to make them render an adult and mature interpretation. We could teach five songs tolerably well in the time that it takes to drill one song for show purposes, and we could teach ten or twenty songs in the time it takes to drill a heterogeneous mass of pupils in a four-part song. These part-songs

should be given to specially trained singers, who can master them without any difficulty. In teaching songs it is not necessary for schools to sing them perfectly. They should, of course, be presented artistically by the teacher, but we should not require a perfect rendition from the children. We would in this way keep them interested, and not have them go stale on the four or five songs that they are generally drilled on during a term. If we must have a few selections for Closing Exercises, then one or two moderately drilled songs might suffice. Is the purpose and aim of music to please gaping visitors at Commence Exercises with musical pyrotechnics, or is it to teach children to love music thru the hearing of and participating in the great vocal and instrumental masterpieces?

To all of this it might be rejoined, that we are giving children to-day many concerts, that our talented pupils frequently perform before the whole school, and that children seem to enjoy these public appearances. Are such programs selected with a definite, conscious purpose, or do we leave them to the whim and the talents of the performers? Are the motives and the movements explained and illuminated to the audience? Are these same pieces repeated periodically, so that children can learn to know and appreciate them? It is the experience of all that we must hear certain kinds of music often, before light begins to break in on us. On first hearing Wagner, who has not felt that it was all sheer noise and confusion? No! we must give children definite purposeful vocal and instrumental concerts, and these must be explained and repeated until they are able to recognize the music when the opening bars are played.

In fact, why should not every music lesson be a concert, with the last ten minutes to be devoted to musical notation? Music would then occupy the same place in the curriculum that it occupies in the life of the individual—

one of the means for an enlightened and profitable leisure. The music lesson to-day is a bore and a weariness. It should be a joy, a refreshing relaxation, a whisper from ethereal regions.

Let us stop feeding our children on musical rocks. We are told by many that children should get a thoro drill in sight-reading in order to acquire power. What power would these musical pedagogs have them acquire? Is it possibly the power to turn over pages of a virtuoso at the piano? What particular use can the average individual make of this so-called power? If we develop the faculty of musical appreciation, we are giving each individual the incentive for any technical accomplishments that he might aspire to in later life. Let our children hear the greatest songs, sonatas, symphonies and operas. The repertoire should be large and varied, and we should make sure that every graduate has heard a few times some of the best and most popular works of the great composers. Let us not insist on any so-called perfection in vocal rendition. Let us not repeat until the joy is all gone. A street-song dies a very natural death. We in our schools to-day, prolong the agony for years, singing the same song term after term. If our deceased pedagogs ever turn over in their graves, it must be when "America" is being sung by their old school for the million and oneth time. No disparagement of "America" is here intended. In fact, "America" should be sung but only on festive occasions, and not when the teacher finds nothing else available in the limited repertoire. Let us have definite daily programs of concert music and let the great compositions be repeated and explained until children come to recognize them by name. We can formulate a course of study in appreciation from the programs of the various popular vocal and instrumental concerts that are given yearly in our big cities.

When shall we begin to hand over to our children their musical inheritance?



## THE LIFE TENURE LAW

ALICE MARTIN

IN THE STATE of New Jersey there is a life-tenure of office law for teachers which makes it possible for a principal or a teacher to keep his or her position to the bitter end. After a teacher gets thru the probationary period of three years, she may be totally inefficient and undesirable, yet nothing short of conviction of a criminal offense can dislodge her. The same is true of a principal.

Let us suppose the case of a principal who began his teaching career thirty or forty years ago in a small country town on a county certificate. He stays there until the country town grows into a select, suburban town, counting possibly among its inhabitants some of the best representatives of our country's intellect in art and in literature. The school grows, new departments are added, such as a kindergarten, departments of music, drawing, manual training, nature-study, etc. A man who thus comes into the position of principal merely by virtue of being there long enough to become protected by the law, may be utterly out of sympathy with the new departments, the new education and the new life. But he stays on and on.

Strange as it may seem, the most intellectual people in a town often leave the electing of school officers to the straggling few who may or may not be interested from motives of public welfare. I know of a New Jersey town of seventeen hundred people whose last school election was attended by fifty-eight people. The voters at that election did not fairly represent the large percentage of professional and intellectual residents. With a semi-indifferent Board of Education consisting of business men who are too busy ever to think of visiting the schools, it is no wonder that we have unsatisfactory conditions in suburban localities.

The gospel of education of a not unfamiliar type of suburban principal consists of the three fundamental studies. His ritual may teach only the old-fashioned observance of law, order and discipline. New and young teachers come to these schools equipped with ideals and with enthusiasm to carry out their ideas. They may wish to forsake some of the obsolete notions of the olden time. They may even wish to commit sacrilege against that ancient and honorable discipline which must of necessity mean death to free expression of life in children. If they do these things they are likely to find set against them the law of New Jersey, under which a teacher may be dismissed with ease at any time within the first three years of service. As a rule, they are under an indifferent Board of Education and impossible working conditions. The principal may be a bully or a toadler. He may be totally unfit to supervise or to teach, but the teachers who work under him must either conform and so kill within themselves the soul of their work, or they may resist and be found insubordinate.

Conditions of this kind cannot last. Some day the people of the town will wake up. Men who are authorities in social work, men who are progressive and modern and awake will take places on the Board of Education, and they will know the schools. They will find there the ashes of former ideals whose fires have been put out by the irresistible pressure of constant smothering. With the new order of things will come a new situation for the teachers to meet. They will be observed from new standpoints and criticized accordingly. If they can adapt themselves to the inevitable change, all will be well with them; if not, they must give way to better teachers.

If the new board of education is far-sighted enough to see that environment helps to make a teacher as much as it helps to make children, they will

seek to better the environment of their new teachers. If they are even more far-sighted,—if they are state-sighted instead of town-sighted,—they will attack neither the teachers nor the principal; they will bend their energies to-

ward repealing a law which does not help the efficient teacher, for she needs no help, but which protects the inefficient teacher, allowing her influence to go on until death or disability relieves the community.

## WHY I AM IN SCHOOL

*[Here are some human documents written by high school pupils in answer to questions put by a committee that is investigating the causes for pupils leaving the high schools.]*

*There is contained in these letters a great deal of food for serious thought on the part of those interested in trying to make the schools yield ideals for life.*  
—Ed.]

BY L. R.

I really don't know why I am in school! Indeed, such a question never entered my mind, and I am not ashamed to say that I think it is a difficult question to answer. I suppose I came to high school because all the other members of our family continued their schooling beyond the grammar school. You see it is a sort of a family habit, handed down until the present day. After I had graduated from the grammar school, some people asked if I were going to high school. I always answered, "of course," for it seemed such a foolish question. Just as if I should be allowed to stay at home, or go out to work at such an age, even if I wanted to do either of those things myself.

After I entered high school, I always said that I would never leave until I had finished, because a high school diploma usually is worth something if one is ever thrown on his own

resources. Suppose I had left at the end of two years, what could I have done? Nothing. Because two years of work does not count one-half as much as four years to the outside world, even though it does so mathematically.

Therefore, I am just here in school because there is nothing else to do and because I do not care at all to stay at home. Of course, I am learning more and more, even though it be a little of everything, but in the end, I think I shall be sorry to leave, for (wonder of the ages to some pupils!) I am one of the persons who like school.

BY R. P.

The first and foremost reason that I am still in high school is that I am compelled to be by my parents. Both my parents say that I must stay in school until they think it time to let me leave. Knowing that I have to stay in school, I have decided to become a teacher. Another reason is the fun I have in school. I think it is much pleasanter to come to school and associate with young people than to be made to accompany mother to different places, which would be monotonous.

Again, if I were at home and knew that my friends were in school having fun and at the same time gaining knowledge, I think I should long to come to school. Although at Regents' time I wish I were somewhere else than in school, on the whole I like it.

"THE TIME IS coming when it will be considered as legitimate for a body of teachers to discuss the problems of pure food supply, or relief for the poor, of means for the suppression of vice, and of better hygienic conditions for the children of our cities, as it is to discuss the problems of method or the organization of school work. What we need, if we are to be effective in

our work, is better organization, more craft consciousness. We now possess potentially great power for social betterment. We are exercising this power in the school, and, as individuals, outside of the schools. We will, let us hope, in time, recognize the larger social demand and perform the larger social service."—G. D. Strayer, in "The Teaching Process," p. 15.

## SABBATICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS\*

### *School Teachers*

Boston, Mass. (In practice since September 1, 1906. For study, one year's leave with half pay, after seven year's service. One year for rest, after twenty-one years' service. *Journal of education*, 64: 424, October 18, 1906; 65: 605, May 30, 1907. *School journal*, 74: 445, May 4, 1907. In Massachusetts. Board of education, 70th annual report, 1905-1906. Boston, Wright & Potter, 1907, p. 318. Public document No. 2.)

Kagan, Josiah M. [The Cambridge plan of granting Sabbatical year to teachers; inaugurated, 1896.] In *New England modern language association. Report*, 1905. p. 16.

After teaching in Cambridge schools for ten years: amount granted, one-third salary, not to exceed 500 dollars.

[Newton, Mass. Inaugurates the "Sabbatical year," 1907.] In *Newton School committee. Annual report*, 1908. Newton, Newton Graphic Press, 1909, p. 51-53.

Rochester, N. Y. (Grants leave of absence on half-pay, after seven years' service, to teachers and superintendents. *American school board journal*, 36, No. 1: 3, January, 1908.)

The Sabbatical year. In *Massachusetts. Board of education. Seventeenth annual report*, 1905-1906. Boston, Wright and Potter, 1907. p. 318. (Public document No. 2.)

Boston and Cambridge the only cities in Massachusetts granting leave, for study, with pay. Boston, one-half of salary; Cambridge, one-third, not to exceed 500 dollars.

[Sabbatical year is granted by Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Newton.] *American school board journal*, 40: 23, May, 1910.

\* This information was furnished by the U. S. Bureau of Education at the request of THE AMERICAN TEACHER.

### *College Professors*

Brown University, Providence, R. I.

Cheney (Washington) State Normal School. (Give teachers every sixth year on half-pay plan. See *Journal of education*, 65: 268, March 7, 1907.)

Columbia University, New York City, N. Y. (Adopted the "Sabbatical year" for professors and adjunct professors, February 3, 1908. See *School bulletin*, 35: 51, November, 1908. Discusses Harvard's method.)

Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (The annual report of the president and treasurer of Harvard College, 1879-80, Cambridge, 1880, p. 19-20, contains the following statement: "The Corporation have decided that they will grant occasional leave of absence for one year on half pay, provided that no professor have such leave oftener than once in seven years; that the applications in any one year be reasonable in number, and properly distributed among the different departments; and that the object of the professor in asking leave of absence be health, rest, study, or the prosecution of original work in literature or sciences.")

Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia.

University of California, Berkeley, California.

University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois.

Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Under these systems of Sabbatical leaves of absence, professors are entitled to a leave of absence one year out of seven, usually on half pay. The University of California, however, allows, two-thirds pay. (Annual report of the U. S. Commissioner of education, 1904, v. 2, p. 1418.)



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*It is the aim of this paper to better the working conditions of the teacher, through sober criticisms of present educational administration, and through discussions tending toward a general realization of the democratic ideal in all matters affecting the schools.*

## RELATIVE EFFICIENCY

WE ARE TROUBLED in this country with a class of prominent citizens who know nothing that is not directly connected with their own business. It is a favorite trick of theirs to reflect upon the worth of the worker in other fields of endeavor. The most common expression of this attitude of contempt for those who do the important work of the world takes the form of the question, "What could he earn if he went into business?" The implication is, of course, that the true measure of human efficiency is to be found in the returns from business activity. It may be admitted that there are thousands of teachers who could not earn in business as much as they get in the schools. This does not show, however, that the teachers are being overpaid. A lawyer or a physician who is able to earn a large sum of money thru profes-

sional service is never compared with the business man; it is taken for granted that he earns much money because he has great ability. Does it ever occur to us to compare the earning power, or rather the ability, of a successful business man or lawyer with that of a successful teacher—in the work of teaching?

There was a time when our psychology permitted us to describe individuals in terms of general faculties. Today we must recognize that a person may be a good teacher without being of any value whatever in commerce; or that a man may be a good scientific investigator without being a good teacher of science.

Let us recognize that there are in the ranks of the teachers many men and women of a low grade of efficiency, that these men and women are tolerated as poor teachers but would not be tolerated as poor clerks or book-keepers, that they receive more money than their services are worth. But let us not accept the business man's standard at his own valuation. There are good teachers who are not fit for business, as there are good business men who are not fit to be teachers.

## THE ORDER OF MERIT

*"Ideas are worth money. Develop them and we'll pay you for them."*

Thus the Buffalo and Allegheny division of the Pennsylvania Railroad system announced recently that it would put upon a practical business basis a plan for getting its men to think in the interests of the railroad. The plan is said to be working well. A number of money awards have already been made to men whose ideas were found on trial to be practical. Incidentally, wells of originality hitherto untapped have been made productive.

The imagination of one who ponders over this announcement flies to the consideration of applications elsewhere. A train dispatcher, a conductor or a mechanic whose experience has been accompanied by some thinking deserves greater reward and encouragement than

the mere satisfaction of knowing that he has been approved as "faithful and loyal." So does a teacher. And teachers, like others who have no part in directing their own work, are always supposed to be content with "well done, good and faithful servant."

Many "good" teachers might become *thinking* teachers if there was held out to them some hope of recognition or tangible reward for constructive work carried out by them, or planned by them for others to do. One of the most discouraging facts characteristic of uniform schedules and other forms of neglect to weigh the value of services, is that a mediocre teacher and an inspired and highly efficient teacher are valued at exactly the same rate. One consequence is that the inspired teacher is likely to lose his interest and hope. Another and more disastrous consequence is that inspired and highly efficient teachers are likely to become fewer and fewer. Indeed, they are rare now.

The Pennsylvania Railroad is working for the pockets of its bondholders. The school system is working for the civic, intellectual and general welfare of future generations of men. But both should find it expedient to obtain and to keep the very best workers possible. School systems might profit by the example of the railway company, and foster the development of ideas supposed to have practical value in education.

Those teachers who develop useful ideas should be credited for their constructive work by official recognition, and by appropriate increase in salary to continue thru the period of practical intellectual productiveness. The term "superior" as it has come into use recently in the New York City educational system, would then have real significance. It would be an honor to be a "superior" teacher, if it meant that he had thought out some of the ideas by which the educational system is run. Furthermore, it would satisfy the natural desire of wide-awake teachers to receive the recognition they sometimes seek in striving to become principals.

## THE TRANSMISSION OF MOTIVE POWER

A PROMINENT MEMBER of the New York City Board of Education is publicly reported to have said recently that "there should be no secrets between the Board and the teachers. The teachers should not feel afraid to go to headquarters and tell any member of the Board or any superintendent what they think about any matter of school administration." This is good advice, but not practical—as yet.

It is too soon to expect teachers to get their ideas into shape and carry them directly to their educational superiors for consideration. However, ere this there should have been many journeys of those bearing ideas, but there have been few ideas carried.

It is illuminating to note that the commissioner's remark implies that he thinks teachers have been afraid to speak out heretofore. If this is true, no small amount of the fear must have been due to the traditional timidity of subordinates and their shyness in approaching officials. But some part of the hesitancy may be traceable to the conviction in the minds of a respectable number of teachers that the promulgation of uninvited and possibly unwelcome ideas is frowned upon, and sometimes punished in indirect and unexpected ways.

What a pity it is that the principle of official convention should have prevented the people from reaping the great benefit that would have come from the friendly coöperation of officials and teachers! And how much greater the pity that there should exist so little of a compelling desire among teachers and officials to search for and bring out all useful constructive ideas, no matter by whom expressed!

Conservation of children is as important as the conservation of the State's other natural resources. To give everyone his chance, helping everyone to make the most of himself, should be the purpose of education.—Maryland Commission on Industrial Education.

## PRACTICAL POLITICS

WE HAVE A LETTER from a teacher in a Western city in which occurs an illuminating comment on the results of depending upon business men for the practical work of administering a city's affairs. "The Board of Education," we read, "was not above suspicion; and it was loudly whispered that the teachers' association used threats of making public the Board's connections with a certain book company, as a means for securing an increase in salaries." The book company is not mentioned; we may therefore assume without prejudice that it was a company operated on a commercial basis, rather than a philanthropic one. The members of the Board were all business men and "leading citizens"—not professional politicians. We have no doubt that the teachers were morally entitled to all that the Board was willing to pay them. But every man and woman who has at heart the healthy growth of our democratic institutions must feel outraged by the compromise of principle forced upon the teachers by our stupid organization of the public's business. The teachers who were cognizant of the wrong-doings of the Board should have been free to make the facts public; it was their duty to make the facts public. Had they done their duty they would in all probability have lost not only their positions, but also their chances of finding re-employment in the schools of the State. Instead of doing their duties as men and women and citizens of a republic, they prostituted themselves for a little jelly to be added to their bread and butter. As teachers we blush with shame; as fellow workers, however, we realize the helplessness of their situation. As citizens we wonder whether democracy is possible.

The supervision which directs and encourages by showing how it is done, is never resented by teachers. Such supervision seldom causes that she-couldn't-do-as-well-herself attitude on the part of the teacher.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS

ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS of a Public Education Association should be to ensure to the public the selection of the best men to high educational office. No outside organizations, not even the newspapers, think it of any significance to discuss the character and qualifications of candidates for important executive positions in the city schools. The teachers are powerless or indifferent even tho they know the candidate to be conspicuously unfit. Teachers' associations are also apathetic. With capable men on the Board of Education and progressive educators on the Board of Superintendents, it might not be as difficult to initiate reforms as it is to-day. Reforms should arise from within—from the educators themselves. This can only come to pass when the best men obtainable are chosen to fill places of responsibility. Here is constructive and far-reaching work for a Public Education Association.

The public management of a material equipment worth a thousand million dollars, and of a yearly budget of over four hundred million dollars, by the communities concerned, is one of the world's greatest experiments in democracy—and one of its most successful ones. As a rule, privately owned schools do not give as good an education, even at greater cost; nor do they treat their employees as well; nor do those in control of them show as much enterprise in seeking improved means and methods. . . . We have the proof that, in at least one case, men can do better work as servants of the people than they would have done under the competition of the market for private gain, and the promise of a time when all men will work together for the common good.—From Edward L. Thorndike's "Education."

We must have freedom and we must not bargain. The public must learn that in advancing our interests it is advancing the cause of education and so of humanity.

## VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN THE BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS\*

STRATTON D. BROOKS

Superintendent of Schools, Boston

THE WORK in Vocational Guidance in the Boston Public Schools is as follows:

1. In the Trade School for Girls and in the High School of Practical Arts a vocational assistant has been appointed.

In the Trade School for Girls the giving of vocational assistance is not left to the teaching body, but is placed in charge of a person appointed for that sole purpose. She is given the title of *vocational assistant* and the regulations of the School Committee provide that one such vocational assistant may be appointed for each one hundred girls in the school.

The vocational assistant is charged with the duty of investigating conditions in the trades taught by the school, in order to enable the school to adapt its course to the exact needs of business and to provide accurate and up-to-date information available for use of parents and pupils. It is the business of the vocational assistant to secure positions for graduates, and, in this sense, she conducts an employment bureau, but with this difference that she knows both the conditions in the trade and the particular girls, and, therefore, endeavors to find not merely a place for the girl, but a place in which she will succeed. The work of the vocational assistant, however, begins with the finding of a place for the girl. It is success that counts, and the vocational assistant is to keep track of her girls, know which ones succeed and more especially which ones fail, and why they fail; to find for these places better suited for their abilities or, perchance, advise them to return to school until they reach a degree of proficiency that will enable them to retain a position once obtained.

On the moral side also the work of the vocational assistant will have great effect. Before the girl leaves school it is hoped that such a mutual relation of

confidence and friendship will be established that any girls who find themselves at work in a shop or factory where conditions are improper will report promptly to the vocational assistant, with the result that the girl will be placed in another position, and that no more girls will be sent to the shop or factory in question until conditions are improved. With the unsuccessful girl, perhaps, the most important work of all may be done. The girl who is efficient and who, because of that efficiency, is soon advanced to the rank and wages of a skilled worker, is far less likely to succumb to temptation than is the girl whose inefficiency keeps her wages below the amount required for decent living. When, perchance, a girl is placed in a position in which she cannot advance or from which she is discharged, the vocational assistant should be on hand to encourage and assist, to tide the girl over immediate difficulty and to find some other work wherein there is a greater prospect of earning a living wage.

2. In each school one or more vocational counselors have been appointed. These counselors have in general the same duties to perform as those outlined for vocational assistants, except that a much larger share of work is concerned with advising pupils what additional education they should undertake in order to fit themselves best for choosing an occupation, and for success therein. Owing to the fact that these vocational counselors must also teach a class, they are not able to follow up the pupils who leave school so closely and effectively as the vocational assistants can. A course of instruction for these counselors is being conducted by the Vocation Bureau.

3. This year two teachers have been specially assigned to investigation work in the lines of vocational guidance. At present they are attempting to determine definitely what has become of the pupils in certain specified districts who have withdrawn from school during the last two years and to keep track also of the pupils who withdraw from these same districts at the present time.

\* From *The Boston Home and School Newsletter*, January, 1912.

A Committee on Vocational Guidance consisting of principals and teachers in various schools has been appointed, which gives consideration to the whole problem of vocational guidance and makes suggestions from time to time with reference to its improvement.

5. The problem of interesting parents in this important subject is conducted with the assistance of the Vocation Bureau, the School and Home Association and other outside organizations.

A BOARD OF EDUCATION in an American city was replaced at the elections by an "honest" board. The "reformers" had carried the election. But alas, writes a high-school teacher of that city, there are only two members who know anything about schools; and they will insist upon judging schools from the business standpoint. The school people have great difficulty in making the honest and disinterested board members understand the needs of the schools, and one of the teachers said: "I think that the best thing to do is to re-elect the old board of grafters, because there are ways of making the grafters do things, and there seems to be no way of making the present members see the light." We wonder whether the methods for making grafters do things are in any way similar to methods for making honest people see the light.

**DEMOCRACY IS AN** idle experiment if it does not rest on popular adequacy, and popular adequacy must give proof of itself not in clamor and demand, but in demonstration that the instinct of the multitude has ceased to be subservient. Democracy must show that in the labor movement, in local political organization, in party activity and in all other cooperative activity, minor and major, it is able to proceed by conference, by discussion, by intelligent and intelligible agreements among equals, and is no longer dependent upon unquestioning obedience rendered to a boss.—Editorial in "The Independent," "On Being Inadequate."

## BOOK REVIEWS

**THE COMING GENERATION.** By WILLIAM BYRON FORBUSH. 12mo, pp xix+402, 1912. New York: D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50 net.

In every generation there has been a great deal of suffering that might have been avoided if the preceding generation had but taken thought of the morrow. As the life of the race is continuous, the generations not being sharply marked off from one another, the taking of thought of has been everybody's business and —was therefore neglected. At the present time everybody's business is receiving an unusual amount of attention, and there are many workers who make a specialty of doing just the things that need being done but are ordinarily left undone. In this book Dr. Forbush brings together a summary of all the activities that are calculated to make a better lot of Americans out of the young people who are to constitute the coming generation. As he states in the preface, this is the first attempt to "furnish in a single volume a short, readable account of all the forces that are working for the betterment of American young people."

The work is divided into five books, which deal respectively with the home, eugenics and health, education, prevention, and religious and social service. The largest book is that on "Betterment Thru Education," this covering more pages than any two of the others. The volume is not only very readable, but contains a remarkable amount of information on the various activities that are revolutionizing the position of the child in society.

The titles of the chapters on educational topics will indicate the scope of the work. The new education; Vocational training and guidance; Some high-school problems; Moral training in school; The special school; Defective children; Play and playgrounds; Clubs for street boys; Camps and outings; College and the child; The beautiful ordering of life, and A child educating himself.

The chapter on Social education deals with such topics as evening schools, vacation schools, recreation centers, organized athletics, etc. In general it treats of the question of the larger use of the school plant in relation to social needs growing out of modern city life. The chapter on "The beautiful ordering of



life" is concerned with the typical community life in America, the resources for adult or extension education and recreation in the small community and in the large community, such as libraries, lectures, clubs, fairs, newspapers, festivals, museums and libraries, etc. The problem of the rural community are also considered, from the point of view of educational forces in the church, the grange and the school.

The self-education of the child is largely a matter of surroundings and intelligence on the part of the human environment. The instinct for asking questions and that for collecting are seldom utilized for the benefit of the child as they should be. The spontaneous organizations among children, such as gangs and baseball teams, are factors for education that need both encouragement and direction.

Anyone who approaches educational problems with an open mind must be impressed by the intricate correlations between the problems of the school and all the other social problems. There are questions of health and home, economic conditions, child labor, city streets, with their endless temptations, the yellow press and the lack of shoes. A brief review of the immediate goals suggested by the survey covers three pages of bare enumeration. If any teacher is in search of activity that is worth while he can surely find it here. The attitude of the author is that of the "possunist—one who believes we can." No true teacher can be less than that.

This book is not one to read thru and lay aside. It should serve as a helpful manual in orienting the teacher's attitude toward the host of questions that are pressing for attention. There is a good index in addition to an analytical table of contents; and a list of bibliographies in addition to special references at the end of each chapter. If it is not possible for every teacher to own a copy of this book there should at least be one in every school in the land.

The bane of our present system is autocracy. It throttles initiative and makes underlings of intelligent men and women. The way out is not a change of masters but a change of ideals—a more democratic administration of our Schools.

## THE OPEN COURT

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IT HAS BEEN said that at one time school officials in New York City were accustomed to settle embarrassing questions by refusing to discuss them. However it may have been once, it is not true now. Men change and times change, chiefly times.

An important note of the new time which *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* has been sounding from its first issue has been struck once more, and with decision, by Superintendent Chadsey, of Denver, whose letter we print in this issue. He says:

"The general idea of recognizing the fact that the teachers are the ones most vitally connected with the work of education and that their judgment should be of great weight in determining questions of administration and of the efficiency of superior officers, is unquestionably valid."

Some of the school officers who have taken part in the symposium on "Superior Principals" begun in the March number of this periodical do not agree specifically with Superintendent Chadsey's point of view. But that is a matter of no great moment. They do discuss the question, and teachers should be thankful for that. Willingness to discuss is obviously the first step in intellectual progress. It implies a desire to think clearly and honestly, at the same time crediting others with similar desires.

Since principals and superintendents are willing to discuss those school problems that affect the privileges of teachers, more teachers ought to stand out from beneath the shadow of tradition, and express publicly the ideas they possess in secret. *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* welcomes writers to its "Open Court." They are urged to allow their own names to be printed, since there is little probability that ideas timidly expressed can materially influence others.

Editor, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

Your number four lies before me and I begin to think you have both a field and a mission. My good wishes are yours and I enclose another dollar for two more copies from the beginning.

The sentence in your first issue, coincident with the new salary law and its encouragement to both men and women teachers, which struck me most forcefully is this from the German: *"There are, it is true, insolent schoolmasters, Mr. School Commissioner, and there are submissive schoolmasters; of both more than enough; I am striving to increase, by one, the number of self-respecting schoolmasters."*

I am glad your contributors sign their own names, and have the courage of their convictions, with malice toward none and charity for all.

CHARLES S. HARTWELL.

Eastern District High School, Brooklyn.

Editor, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

I have received your letter concerning the article on "Superior Principals."

I am very positive that there should be a greater amount of power in the hands of the teachers of the schools of the United States. Certainly those who work under a principal should have some opportunity of having their judgment as to their principal respected as of worth. Of course, all experiments tending to increase the actual influence of the teacher in school administration, are tentative and probably the plan as outlined in your periodical, would prove unsatisfactory in some ways.

The general idea of recognizing the fact that the teachers are the ones most vitally connected with the work of education and that their judgment should be of great weight in determining questions of administration and of the efficiency of superior officers, is unquestionably valid.

As a matter of fact the judgments of teachers do very often reach the superintendent and have great weight in determining the efficiency of principals. I am convinced that sooner or later the representative idea will have recognition in school administration. I have often thought that a representative council of strong teachers in various departments would be of great assistance in determining many questions of vital importance in school administration.

C. E. CHADSEY.

Superintendent of Denver Public Schools.

Editor, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

I really am not clear in my own mind as to the question you quote in your letter of March 27th, and therefore I do not wish to go on record in the matter. I am interested in democracy and education, and in the proper evaluation of the work of all teachers, principals included. Whether or not the method of estimating a principal's efficiency that you suggest in your questionnaire will bring the right results I do not know. I can see some grave dangers in the plan.

W. D. LEWIS.

Principal William Penn High School, Philadelphia.

Editor, THE AMERICAN TEACHER:

I have received the marked copy of THE AMERICAN TEACHER and have read the questionnaire that you propose to use in investigating the capabilities of principals and superintendents. I feel that you have very well covered the ground, but would suggest that other investigations should be made than those among the teachers under the principal, touching upon the qualifications of the principal.

CHARLES A. GREATHOUSE.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indianapolis, Ind.

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*This number of The American Teacher is being sent to the subscribers of The Progressive Journal of Education to take the place of the latter paper. Those who have subscribed to both papers will have their credit extended to include the proper number of copies.*

*We would ask those who now see The American Teacher for the first time to examine it carefully. Make up your mind whether it stands for the things you wish to support, or for the things you wish to oppose. If you are in sympathy with the purpose of this magazine, make up your mind to subscribe and get as many others to subscribe as you can.*

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EDITED BY

**B. RUSSELL HERTS and RICHARD LE GALLIENNE**

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

**GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK**

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